

## THIRD EPOCH.

### Decline of the People of Israel. From the Time of Roboam to Jesus Christ. (962 B. C.)

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#### CHAPTER LXI.

##### *Division of the Kingdom.*

He that walketh with the wise, shall be wise; a friend of fools shall become like to them.—*Prov. 13, 20.*

**A**FTER the death of Solomon, all the people of Israel came to Roboam, his son, and said: "Thy father laid a grievous yoke upon us, do thou take off a little of his most heavy yoke, and we will serve thee." Roboam told them to come back on the third day and he would give them his answer. He then took counsel with the ancients of the people who had stood before Solomon, his father, as to what course he should pursue.

2. The ancients advised the king saying: "If thou wilt yield to this people and speak gentle words to them, they will be thy servants always." Roboam, not satisfied with this advice of the old men, betook himself to the young men who were his own companions, and asked what they would counsel him to do.

3. The young men who had been brought up with him said: "Thus shalt thou speak to this people: My father put a heavy yoke upon you, but I will add to your yoke; my father beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions." When the people had returned on the third day, for an answer, Roboam spoke to them as the young men had advised.



4. Then the people, seeing that they had nothing to expect from their new king, began to say among themselves that Roboam was nothing to them. And ten of the tribes, throwing off his authority, chose for their king Jeroboam, who had been a servant of Solomon. Only the two tribes of Juda and Benjamin remained with Roboam. From that day forth the people of Israel were divided into two kingdoms, that of Juda and that of Israel.

5. Jerusalem continued to be the capital of Juda, and Samaria became afterwards the capital of Israel. But the effects of the separation went still farther; for Jeroboam, king of Israel, thought within himself that if the people continued to go up to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice to the Lord in the temple, their hearts would turn again to Roboam, and the kingdom of Israel would surely return to the house of David.

6. To avoid this danger he made two golden calves, which he placed at the two extremities of his kingdom—one at Dan, the other at Bethel—and told the people that they should not go up to Jerusalem to worship, for that these were the gods that had brought them out of Egypt. In this way he led the people into idolatry, for they repaired to the places pointed out to them by their king and worshiped the golden calves.

7. On the other hand, Roboam, king of Juda, who had seen with grief the defection of the ten tribes, was all his life making war on Jeroboam. This state of continued warfare was kept up by their successors on both sides, and more than once the aid of foreign nations was called in by one or the other. In this way did these wicked kings cause much sin and misery among their people.

8. Even the kings of Juda soon fell into idolatry, and the people, following their example, forgot the worship of the true God, and gave themselves up to all manner of wickedness. All this sin, misery, and ruin were partly the effects of Solomon's departure from the ways of justice: terrible



example of the ruin that sin brings on those who commit it, and even on their children after them.

### QUESTIONS.

1. After the death of Solomon what did the people of Israel beseech Roboam, his son, to do? What did Roboam tell them? With whom did he then take counsel? 2. What did the ancients advise the king to do? Was Roboam satisfied with this advice? To whom did he betake himself? 3. What did the young men say? 4. What did the people, seeing that they had nothing to expect from their new king, begin to say among themselves? What did ten of the tribes do? What two tribes remained with Roboam? Into what two kingdoms were the people of Israel from that day divided? 5. What city continued to be the capital of Juda? What city was afterwards that of Israel? What other sad effect came of the separation? 6. To avoid this danger, what did Jeroboam do? Where did he place the two golden calves? What did he tell the people? 7. On the other hand, what did Roboam, king of Juda, grieved at the defection of the ten tribes, do all his life? What was kept up by their successors on both sides? Whose aid did they more than once call in? 8. Who fell into idolatry? What did their people do? To what did they give themselves up? What was partly the cause of all this sin and misery? Of what is it a terrible example?

## DECLINE OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

### CHAPTER LXII.

*God Raises up Prophets.—Mission of the Prophet Elias.*  
(907 B. C.)

The Lord is become a refuge for the poor: a helper in due time in tribulation.—Ps. 9, 10.

**I**N order to bring back the kings and the people to better sentiments, God raised up, at different times, holy persons, who are known as prophets. These prophets preached penance in a very impressive manner, and they proved the truth of their divine mission by working great miracles.

2. God revealed to them many future events. They predicted the principal circumstances of the birth, life, passion,



death and glory of the Messias. One of the most celebrated of the prophets was Elias. He lived in the reign of Achab, king of Israel. The king was very wicked. None of his predecessors had committed so many crimes as he.

3. He had married a Gentile woman named Jezabel; and he built a temple to Baal, and had consecrated to the service of that false god four hundred and fifty priests, whilst he had caused the priests of the Lord to be put to death. In a word, his intention seemed to be to destroy the true religion entirely among the ten tribes.

4. Elias, clad in a rough sheep-skin, and with a staff in his hand, presented himself before Achab and said: "As the Lord liveth, the God of Israel, in whose sight I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these three years but according to the words of my mouth." Achab was very angry to hear these words of the prophet, and secretly resolved to put Elias to death.

5. Then the Lord, knowing the evil intention of the king, commanded Elias to go and conceal himself near the brook Carith, in the vicinity of the Jordan. The prophet obeyed, and behold, the ravens brought him bread or flesh every morning and every evening for many days; and he drank of the torrent.

6. Some time after, the brook ran dry, and the Lord commanded Elias to go to Sarepta, a city of the Sidonians. Elias went accordingly, and when he drew near the gate of the city he saw a woman gathering sticks, and he called her and said: "Give me a little water in a vessel that I may drink."

7. As the woman was going to fetch it, he called after her: "Bring me also a morsel of bread." She answered: "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread, but only a handful of meal in a pot, and a little oil in a cruse; I am gathering two sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat and die."

8. The prophet assured her saying: "Fear not; but go and do as thou hast said; but first make for me of the same meal



a little hearth-cake. For thus said the Lord: 'The pot of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil be diminished until the day wherein the Lord will give rain upon the earth'."

9. The woman did as Elias told her and from that day forth she had meal in her pot and oil in her cruse, and knew no want, neither Elias, nor she, nor her son. Now, it happened some time after, that the son of the poor widow of Sarepta fell sick and died. She said to the prophet: "What have I done to thee, thou man of God? Hast thou come to me that my iniquities should be remembered?" Thereupon Elias took the child, and went into the upper chamber and laid it upon his own bed. Then he cried to the Lord: "O Lord, hast Thou also afflicted the widow with whom I am after a sort maintained?" Then he stretched himself and measured himself three times upon the child; and the soul of the boy returned and he revived.

10. Elias took the child and brought him down to his mother, and said: "Behold, thy son liveth." Full of joy and gratitude the woman exclaimed: "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true." Elias, the grown man, stretching himself and measuring himself upon the small body of the dead child is a figure of the Incarnation, in which the Son of God so adapted himself to our human nature as to become man without ceasing to be God.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. Whom did God raise up at times, in order to bring back the kings and the people to better sentiments? What did these prophets preach? How did they prove the truth of their divine mission? 2. What did they predict? Who was one of the most celebrated of the prophets? In what reign did Elias live? 3. What great crimes had the king committed? 4. What did Elias say to Ahab when he presented himself before him? What did Ahab secretly resolve? 5. What did the Lord then command Elias to do? How was Elias fed in the wilderness? 6. Some time after, when the brook ran dry, whither did the Lord command Elias to go? Whom



did he see as he drew near the gate of the city? What did he ask the woman to do? 7. What did the prophet call after her when she was going to fetch the water? What did the woman answer? 8. What did the prophet tell her? What did he then command her to do? Telling her what? 9. Did the woman obey? What followed? Some time after this, who fell sick and died? What did the woman say to Elias? What did Elias do? What did he pray? Did the Lord hear his prayer? 10. What did the woman, full of joy and gratitude, say to Elias? How is the manner in which Elias raised the child to life a figure of the Incarnation?

## CHAPTER LXIII.

### *The Sacrifice of Elias.*

Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve Him only.—*Deut. 6, 13.*

**A**FTER the earth had remained three years and six months without rain or dew, the Lord spoke to Elias: "Go and show thyself to Achab, that I may give rain upon the face of the earth." The prophet obeyed. When Achab saw him he said: "Art thou he that troublest Israel?" The prophet answered: "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, who have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and have followed Baalim."

2. "Nevertheless, send now and gather unto me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal, four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves, four hundred." Achab obeyed, being afraid to do otherwise, on account of the famine that was everywhere, and he went himself to the mountain. Then Elias spoke to the people of Israel, saying: "How long do you halt between two sides? If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him."

3. The people feeling the justice of his reproach, made no answer. They were ashamed and afraid. Elias then added: "I only remain a prophet of the Lord, but the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men. Let two bullocks be given us; and let them choose one bullock for themselves,



and cut it in pieces, but put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under it.

4. "Call ye on the names of your gods, and I will call on the name of my Lord, and the God that shall answer by fire, let Him be the God." All the people answered: "A very good proposal." Then the priests of Baal, clad in their richest garments and crowned with laurel, took an ox, and slew him.

5. Then they erected an altar, placed the dead ox upon it, and danced around it crying out: "Baal, hear us." This they did from morning until noon, but no fire came to consume their sacrifice. Then Elias, mocking them, called out: "Cry with a louder voice; for he is a god, and perhaps he is talking with some one, or on a journey, or is asleep and must be awaked."

6. Then they began to cry louder than ever, hacking their bodies with knives, as they were accustomed to do, until they were covered with blood. This they kept up till evening, but all in vain. Then Elias told the people to come to him. And he erected an altar to the Lord; took twelve stones, and laid the wood in order upon them, then placed the ox, which had been cut in pieces, upon the wood.

7. He then poured water upon the victim till it ran down on every side and filled the trench around the altar. This being done, he said: "O Lord God, show this day that Thou art the God of Israel, and I, Thy servant, and that according to Thy commandment, I have done all these things. Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this people may learn that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their hearts again."

8. That instant fire came down from heaven and consumed the holocaust, the wood, the stones, and the water in the trench. The people having witnessed this prodigy, fell on their faces, exclaiming: "The Lord He is God! The Lord He is God!" And the prophet, retiring from the multi-



tude, went up alone to the top of the mountain, where he prostrated himself before the Lord in praise and thanksgiving.

9. Then he besought the Lord to refresh the earth with water. And behold a little cloud arose from the sea, no bigger than the foot of a man, and it spread itself gradually over the heavens, and rain fell in abundance. The land of Israel, suffering from the long drought, was a figure of the



ELIAS OFFERING SACRIFICE.

great spiritual drought from which the whole world suffered before the coming of Christ. Elias bidding the heavens to rain, was a figure of Christ opening the fountains of grace to a perishing world.

10. The rain itself, which gave a new life to the earth, is a type of the grace of God which renews the soul of the converted sinner.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What did the Lord say to Elias after the earth had remained three years and six months without rain? What did Achab say



when he saw Elias? What did the prophet answer? 2. What did Achab do? What did Elias say to the people of Israel? What did Elias add? 3 and 4. Were the people satisfied with his proposal? 5. What did the priests of Baal then do? What did they cry out? Did fire come to consume their sacrifice? What did Elias, mocking them, call out? 6. What did the priests of Baal then do? What did Elias then do? 7. This being done, what did the prophet say, raising his hands and eyes to heaven? 8. What came down instantly from heaven? What did the people exclaim, falling on their faces? Whither did the prophet retire? What did he do there? 9. What did he beseech the Lord to do? What happened then? Of what was the land of Israel, suffering from the long drought, a figure? Of whom was Elias a figure? 10. Of what was the rain that gave new life to the earth a type?

## CHAPTER LXIV.

### *Wickedness of Achab and Jezabel.—Their Punishment.*

The Lord Thy God hateth all injustice.—*Deut. 25, 16.*

**A**CHAB had a palace at Jezrahel, and near it was a vineyard owned by a man named Naboth. Achab, coveting the vineyard, said one day to Naboth: "Give me thy vineyard, that I may make me a garden, and I will give thee a better vineyard, or I will give thee the worth of it in money." Naboth answered him: "The Lord be merciful to me, and not let me give thee the inheritance of my fathers." For the law of Moses forbade the son to sell the property which he had inherited from his forefathers.

2. The king was so troubled because he could not have the vineyard that he could neither eat nor sleep. Jezabel, his queen, perceiving this, inquired the cause of his sadness and his fretting. The king having explained the cause, Jezabel mockingly said: "Thou art of great authority, indeed, and governest well the kingdom of Israel! Arise, and eat bread, and be of good cheer: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezrahelite."

3. She then wrote letters in the king's name to the chief men of the city, men whom she knew to be wicked like her.



self, requesting them to find some men who would wrongfully accuse Naboth. These men were easily found, and they bore false witness against Naboth, saying that he had blasphemed God and the king. And on their testimony Naboth was condemned, taken out of the city, and stoned to death.

4. Jezabel, being informed of Naboth's death, went and told her husband that he might now take the vineyard, as Naboth was dead. And Achab took the vineyard. Then the Lord commanded Elias to go to Achab, to reproach him with his crime, and tell him that the dogs would lick up his own blood on the very spot on which Naboth was slain, and that the queen would be devoured by dogs in the same field. This prediction was literally fulfilled.

5. Three years after, Achab was mortally wounded in a battle with the Syrians; and when the chariot in which he received the fatal wound was being washed, after his death, the dogs came and licked up the blood.

6. Some time after, when Jehu was king, he went to Jezrahel. And when Jezabel heard of his coming she dressed herself in her richest apparel. She painted her face and adorned her head, and stood at a window of her palace. Jehu, seeing her at the window, ordered her servants to cast her down. They did so, and the walls were sprinkled with her blood, and the hooves of the horses trod upon her, and the dogs came and ate her flesh. After Jehu had dined he ordered Jezabel to be buried, but only her head, feet, and hands remained.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. Who had a vineyard near Achab's palace at Jezrahel? What did Achab, coveting the vineyard, say one day to Naboth? What did Naboth answer him? 2. Why was the king so troubled that he could neither eat nor sleep? What did Jezabel, his queen, mockingly say? 3. What did she then do? What did these men say against Naboth? What was done to Naboth? 4. What did Jezabel, being informed of Naboth's death, tell her husband? What did the Lord then command Elias to do? What was he to tell the king? Was this prediction fulfilled? 5. How was it fulfilled? 6. Some time after, when Jehu was king, where did



he go? When Jezabel heard of his coming, what did she do? What did Jehu, seeing her at the window, order her servants to do? What followed?

## CHAPTER LXV.

### *Elias Taken to Heaven.—The Prophet Eliseus Chosen to Succeed Him.*

If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor.—*John 12, 26.*

**A**T one time Elias, being persecuted by Jezabel, fled into the desert. He was very sad, and desired to die, for he thought all the Israelites had fallen into idolatry. Being fatigued, he cast himself down and slept in the shadow of a juniper tree; and behold, an angel of the Lord touched him and said: "Arise, eat; for thou hast yet a great way to go." Elias looked, and saw at his head a hearth-cake and a vessel of water. He arose, ate and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, until he came to the mount of God, Horeb.

2. Then the Lord appeared to him amidst the whistling of a gentle wind, consoled him and said: "Return and anoint Eliseus to be prophet in thy room, and I will leave me seven thousand men whose knees have not bowed before Baal." Elias departed, and found Eliseus ploughing with oxen. He cast his mantle upon him, and Eliseus forthwith left the oxen and the plow, followed Elias and ministered to him.

3. But the time came when the Lord wished to take Elias from the earth. The spirit of God led him to the Jordan, and Eliseus accompanied him. Elias took his mantle, folded it together, and struck the water; the waters divided, and both passed over on dry ground. As they walked on, there appeared a fiery chariot, with horses. Elias was taken up alive to heaven. Eliseus saw him, and cried: "My father!



My father!" When he saw Elias no longer, he rent his garments in grief; then, taking the mantle which Elias had dropped, he went back and struck with it the waters of the Jordan. They were divided, and Eliseus passed over. The other disciples of Elias, seeing this, said: "The spirit of Elias hath rested upon Eliseus." And coming to meet him, they worshiped him, falling to the ground.

4. After Elias had been taken up into heaven, Eliseus



ELIAS GOING UP TO HEAVEN IN A FIERY CHARIOT.

arose and exhorted the Israelites to remain faithful to the Lord. God also favored him with the gift of miracles. When he came to Jericho, the men of the city said to him: "The situation of this city is very good, but the waters are very bad." Eliseus answered: "Bring me a new vessel, and put salt into it." When they had brought it he went out to the spring, cast the salt into it, and the waters were healed.

5. One day, when Eliseus was going up to Bethel, where



the golden calf was worshiped, some boys came out of the city and mocked him, saying: "Go up, thou baldhead." Eliseus, knowing that in dishonoring him they dishonored God, turned back and cursed them in the name of the Lord. Immediately two bears came out of the wood that was near by, and killed forty-two of the boys.

6. Some time after, Eliseus cured of leprosy, in a miraculous manner, Naaman, general of the Syrian army, a rich and valiant man. The wife of Naaman had in her service a young Israelite girl who had been carried off into Syria by robbers. This maiden then said one day to her mistress: "I wish my master had been with the prophet that is in Samaria. He would certainly have healed him of the leprosy." When Naaman heard this he set out for Samaria with horses and chariots.

7. When Naaman reached the prophet's dwelling he sent a messenger to let him know of his coming, and why he had come. Eliseus sent him word to bathe seven times in the Jordan, and he would be healed. Naaman was angry, and went away, saying: "I thought he would have come out to me, and standing, would have invoked the name of the Lord his God, and touched with his hand the place of the leprosy, and healed me. Are not the rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?"

8. As he was thus turning angrily away, his servants said to him: "Father, if the prophet had bidden thee to do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it, how much rather what he now hath said to thee, 'Wash, and thou shalt be clean'." And Naaman, seeing that what they said was just, alighted from his chariot, bathed seven times in the Jordan, and was made clean.

9. He returned to the man of God, and told him that now he knew for certain that there was no God but the God of Israel; and he offered him presents, but Eliseus refused to receive anything. Hardly had Naaman gone a little way, when Giezi, the servant of Eliseus, went after him, and



said: "My master hath sent me to thee, saying: 'Just now there are come to me from Mount Ephraim two young men, sons of the prophets; give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments'."

10. Naaman gladly gave him two talents of silver and two changes of garments. Giezi returned with the presents, and having hidden them, he stood before Eliseus. The prophet asked him where he had been, and Giezi answered that he had been nowhere.

11. Eliseus being angry, said: "Was not my heart present when the man turned back from his chariot? Now thou hast money to buy olive-yards, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants; but the leprosy of Naaman shall stick to thee forever." And Giezi went out a leper, as white as snow.

12. One great miracle the prophet wrought, even after his death. It happened in this manner: On one occasion a number of men were carrying a corpse to the cemetery for burial. As they were making the grave, behold, robbers from Moab rushed in upon them. They, in their fright, cast the corpse into the sepulcher of Eliseus. No sooner had the dead man touched the bones of the prophet than he was instantly restored to life, and came forth from the tomb.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Where did Elias go when he was persecuted by Jezabel? What did he think? Being fatigued, what did he do? What did the angel say to him? What did he see, on awakening? 2. Who appeared to Elias? What did the Lord say to him? 3. What did Elias do under the inspiration of God? What did Eliseus cry out? What did he do when he saw Elias no longer? What did the disciples of Elias say when they saw the waters divided by Eliseus? 4. What did Eliseus do after Elias was taken up into heaven? With what did God favor him? What did some of the men in the city say to him? What did Eliseus answer? 5. What happened when Eliseus was going up to Bethel? What did the boys, mocking him, say? What did Eliseus do? Why did he do so? What came out of the wood? How many of the boys did the bears kill? 6. Whom did Eliseus cure of leprosy, in a miraculous manner? What did the young Israelite say to Naaman's wife? When Naaman heard



this, what did he do? 7. What did Naaman do when he reached the prophet's dwelling? What did Eliseus send him word to do? What did Naaman say, going away angry? 8. As he was turning away, what did his servants say to him? What did Naaman do, seeing that what they said was just? 9. What did Naaman say, going to the man of God? When Naaman had gone a little way, what did Giezi, a servant of Eliseus do? What did he say to Naaman? 10. What did Naaman give him? What did Giezi do when he returned? What did the prophet ask him? What did Giezi answer? 11. What did Eliseus, being angry with his servant, tell him? 12. What great miracle took place after the death of Eliseus?

## CHAPTER LXVI.

### *The Prophet Jonas.*

Be converted to Me, and you shall be saved.—*Isaias* 45, 22.

**A**FTER the death of Eliseus, the Lord wishing to show mercy to the Gentiles, raised up the prophet Jonas, that he might go to Ninive, and preach penance to the inhabitants of that city. The wickedness of the pagan Ninivites had provoked the anger of God, and He had said to Jonas: "Arise, and go to Ninive, and preach in it, for the wickedness thereof is come up before me."

2. Jonas, however, knew that the Lord easily forgives: hence he was afraid that if he preached to the people of Ninive they would do penance, and that consequently the Lord would spare them, while he himself would be looked upon as a false prophet. So Jonas rose up to flee from the face of the Lord, and he embarked on board a ship which sailed for Tharsis. But the Lord sent a great storm, and the sea heaved and swelled, and the ship threatened to sink.

3. Then the sailors being frightened, threw into the sea all the merchandise that was on board in order to lighten the vessel. And each one began praying to his own god for help. But Jonas was below, fast asleep; and the shipmaster



went to him and said: "Why art thou asleep? Rise up, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think of us, that we may not perish!"

4. But the sailors, seeing that the violence of the storm continued to increase, proposed to cast lots that they might know why this evil had come upon them. And they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonas. Then Jonas confessed his sin and said: "Take me up, and cast me into the sea, and the sea shall be calm to you."

5. The sailors, unwilling to throw Jonas overboard, rowed very hard to gain the shore, where they might leave him in safety. But they were not able; for the sea swelled and tossed higher than ever. At last they took Jonas and cast him into the sea, and immediately the storm ceased, and the sea was calm.

6. At the same moment the Lord sent a great fish, which opened its jaws and swallowed Jonas. And he remained three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, continually calling on God to save him, saying: "I am cast away, out of the sight of Thy eyes; but yet I shall see Thy holy temple again." His prayer was heard, and on the third day the fish threw Jonas out of its mouth on the dry land.

7. And the Lord spoke a second time to Jonas, and told him to go to Ninive, the great city, and preach penance. Jonas went without delay, and entering into the city he walked a whole day through its streets, calling out as he went: "Yet forty days, and Ninive shall be destroyed." The people of Ninive were struck with terror, knowing how guilty they were, and a general fast was proclaimed throughout the whole city, both for man and beast.

8. The king himself put on sackcloth and sat in ashes, and he and all his people, from the greatest to the least, fasted and did penance, in order to appease the anger of God. And because of their repentance, God had mercy on the people of Ninive, and spared the city. Meanwhile, Jonas had gone



out of the city, and sat down at some distance, towards the east, to see what would happen. And finding that God had spared Ninive, he was angry and much troubled lest he should pass for a false prophet.

9. But God, wishing to show His prophet how unreasonable was his anger, caused to spring up, during the night, a large vine, which sheltered him next day from the scorching rays of the sun. But on the following morning God sent a worm which ate up the root of the plant, and it withered away.

10. Now, when the sun had risen, God sent a hot and burning wind; besides, the sun struck full-on the head of Jonas, so that he broiled with the heat to such a degree that he desired to die. Then the Lord said to him: "Thou art grieved for the ivy for which thou hast not labored, and shall not I spare Ninive, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons that knew not how to distinguish between their right hand and their left?"\* Jonas, lying three days in the whale's belly, was a figure of Jesus lying three days in the tomb. So, also, Jonas coming forth alive on the third day was a figure of our Lord's resurrection.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. After the death of Eliseus, whom did the Lord raise up? What had provoked the anger of God? What did God say to Jonas? 2. Of whom was Jonas afraid? What did he do in order not to preach in Ninive? What happened then? 3. What did the sailors do in order to lighten the vessel? Where was Jonas? What did the shipmaster say to him? 4. What did the sailors then propose, seeing that the storm continued to increase? When they cast lots, on whom did it fall? What did Jonas then do? What did he tell the sailors to do? 5. What did the sailors do, being unwilling to throw him overboard? What followed? What did they at last do? What was the result? 6. What did the Lord send at the same moment? What did it do? How long did Jonas remain in the whale's belly? How did Jonas pray? Did God hear the prayer of Jonas? 7. What did the Lord tell Jonas a second time to do? What did Jonas do? What did he cry out in the streets of Ninive? What was then proclaimed? 8. What did the king do? What did all the people do? Why had God mercy on the people of Ninive? 9. What did God do in order to show His prophet how unreasonable was his anger? 10. Of whom was Jonas lying three days in



the whale's belly, a figure? Of what was his coming forth alive, on the third day, a figure?

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## FINAL OVERTHROW OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL (718 B. C.)

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### CHAPTER LXVII.

#### *Tobias During the Captivity of Babylon.*

Know that it is an evil and a bitter thing for thee, to have left the Lord thy God.—*Jer. 2, 19.*

THE Lord ceased not to send to the Israelites holy prophets who preached penance to them, both by word and example. But the Israelites would not be converted, and their wickedness increased to such an extent that the Almighty resolved to punish them in His wrath, and utterly to destroy them. He, therefore, caused Salmanazar, king of Assyria, to come against them with a mighty army. He laid siege to the strong city of Samaria, and after three years took it, and carried off most of the inhabitants, and thus the kingdom of Israel ceased to exist.

2. The Israelites having been slain or carried off into captivity, their land had become almost a wilderness, and the Assyrian king, in order to people it again, sent thither thousands of his pagan subjects, who settling amongst the scattered remains of the ten tribes, were soon so mixed up with them that they became, as it were, a new people, and scarcely a trace remained of the people of Israel.

3. Those of this mixed race who settled in the northern part of the country were called Galileans; those who lived in the south were called Samaritans, from Samaria, the ancient capital of the kingdom; and those who dwelt beyond the Jordan were called Pereans. The religion of these districts was a mixture of Judaism and Paganism; hence they hated



the two tribes of Juda and Benjamin, who had remained true to the old religion.

4. Those who were taken captive to Assyria never returned to their own country. Still God did not fail to give numerous proofs of His watchful care over those unhappy exiles. One of the most remarkable of these instances is found in the history of the good Tobias. When he was in his own country, and in his earliest years, he never associated with the wicked; never went to adore the golden calf, but kept the law of God exactly.

5. Hence, God protected him in the land of captivity, and caused him to find favor in the sight of Salmanazar, who allowed him to go wherever he wished. He went, accordingly, to all his fellow-captives, consoling and encouraging them. He shared with them all he possessed, fed them when they were hungry, and clothed them when naked. His life was spent in such works of charity.

6. King Salmanazar being dead, Sennacherib, his son, who succeeded him on the throne, was not so favorable to Tobias, and put many of the Israelites to death. But Tobias, fearing God more than the king, hid the bodies of his brethren in his house, and buried them by night. The king, having heard this, sentenced Tobias to death, and took away all his property.

7. Tobias fled with his wife and son, and remained concealed in a place of safety, till the death of the wicked king, who forty days later was killed by his own sons. Then Tobias returned, and all his property was restored to him. But the persecution against the Israelites was still raging, so Tobias resumed his former works of charity, relieving the distressed and burying the dead. Coming home one day very much fatigued, he lay down near the wall and fell asleep.

8. While he was sleeping, the hot dung from a swallow's nest fell on his eyes and made him blind. This was a great affliction, but it did not prevent Tobias from fearing and



blessing God, and thanking Him for all His mercies—even for this new trial. Now Anna, his wife, was his only support. She went out every day to work, and by her hard earnings kept her blind husband from want. On one occasion, Anna received a young kid for the labor of her hands, and she brought it home.

9. Now Tobias, hearing it bleat, was afraid and said: "Take heed, lest perhaps it be stolen; restore it to its owner." He questioned Anna as to how she got the kid. Now Anna was a good and virtuous woman, but this suspicion of her husband roused her anger. She replied very sharply, and made use of words that were provoking to her husband. Tobias, however, only sighed and began to pray.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. Why did the Lord send prophets to the Israelites? Were they converted? What did the Almighty resolve to do? Whom did He cause to come against them with a mighty army? To what city did he lay siege? What did he do when he took it? 2. What did the Assyrian King do in order to repeople the land of Israel? What followed? 3. What were those called who settled in the northern part of the country? What were they who settled in the south called? And what were they who settled beyond the Jordan called? What was the religion of the Samaritans? How did they regard the people of Juda? 4. Did those who were taken as captives to Assyria ever return? What ceased to exist? Did God's care over these unhappy exiles continue? What was one of the most remarkable proofs of His watchful care? What was the life of Tobias in his own country? 5. What did God do for Tobias in the land of captivity? What use did he make of his liberty? How was his life spent? 6. Who succeeded Salmanazar? Was he as favorable to Tobias? What did he do to the Israelites? What did Tobias do? What did the king, hearing this, order to be done to Tobias? 7. What did Tobias do? When did he return home? Did the persecution of the Israelites, meanwhile, abate? What did Tobias resume? 8. What happened to him one day when he came home very much fatigued, and fell asleep near the wall? What effect had this new affliction on Tobias? Who was his only support? What did she do? 9. What did she receive, on one occasion, for the labor of her hands? What did Tobias fear? What did he ask his wife? How did she reply? What did Tobias do?



## CHAPTER LXVIII.

*Parting Advice of Tobias to his Son.—Departure of  
Young Tobias.*

The Angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear  
Him.—Ps. 33, 8.

**T**OBIAS, seeing himself surrounded by so many miseries, thought he could not live much longer. He, therefore, called his son, and said: "My son, when God shall take my soul, thou shalt bury my body; and thou shalt honor thy mother all the days of her life; for thou must be mindful what and how great perils she has suffered for thee. And when she also shall have ended the time of her life, bury her by me.

2. "And all the days of thy life have God in thy mind, and take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the commandments of the Lord our God. Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person. If thou hast much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little. For alms deliver from sin and death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness. Take heed to keep thyself, my son, from all fornication.

3. "Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind, nor in thy word, for from it all perdition took its beginning. If any man has done work for thee, pay him his hire. See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another. Bless God at all times, and desire of Him to direct thy ways, and that all thy counsels may abide in Him."

4. Then the son answered saying: "I will do all these things, father, which thou hast commanded me." Tobias having thus advised his son, sent him to Rages, a distant city, to collect a debt of long standing. And the young Tobias not



knowing the road, went out to seek a guide who would show him the way.

5. He had not gone far when he met a beautiful young man, standing ready girt as for a journey. It was the Archangel Raphael. Tobias did not know who the young man was, but he addressed him, saying: "Good young man. knowest thou the way that leadeth to the country of the Medes?" The angel answered: "I know it." Then the young Tobias introduced him to his father, who asked him: "Canst thou conduct my son to Gabelus, at Rages?"

6. The young man replied: "I will conduct him thither, and bring him back to thee." Then Tobias blessed the two young men, praying: "May you have a good journey; may God be with you in your way, and may His angel accompany you." Then they both set out on their journey, and the dog followed them. But his mother wept and said to her husband: "Thou hast taken the staff of our old age, and hast sent him away." On the evening of the first day the travelers reached the banks of the river Tigris. Tobias, heated and warm, sat down on the bank and put his feet into the water.

7. Suddenly an enormous fish came up to devour him. Tobias cried out to the angel: "Sir, he cometh upon me!" The angel, seeing his terror, exclaimed: "Take him by the gill and draw him to thee." He did so, and when the fish lay panting before his feet, the angel said: "Take out his heart, his gall, and his liver; for these are useful medicines." Then, making a fire, Tobias broiled some of the fish, which furnished a repast; then he salted a portion of what remained to serve as provision for the journey.

8. When they came to a certain city, Tobias said to his guide: "Where wilt thou that we lodge?" The angel answered: "There is here a man named Raguel, a kinsman of thy tribe, who has a daughter named Sara: and thou must take her to wife." Tobias replied: "I hear that she hath



been given to seven husbands, and they all died, and a devil killed each of them on the night of his wedding."

9. Tobias added that, as he was the only son of his aged parents, and if such a misfortune should befall him, it would bring down their old age with sorrow to the grave. The angel answered that the devil had such power over those who in their marriage banish God from their heart, and



TOBIAS TAKING THE FISH.

think only of gratifying their evil passions. "But thou," he continued, "when thou shalt take her, give thyself for three days to nothing else but to prayer; then the devil shall be driven away and you shall obtain a blessing."

10. Having entered into the house of Raguel, Tobias made himself known, and was warmly received by Raguel, as the son of an old friend and of a most worthy man. At the same time Anna, the wife of Raguel, and Sara, his daughter, wept for joy. They then prepared a repast for the travel-



ers, and Raguel prayed them to sit down to eat. Tobias told him that he would neither eat nor drink till he promised to give him Sara, his daughter, in marriage.

11. Raguel seemed to hesitate, but the angel told him not to be afraid to give his daughter to the young man, for that he feared the Lord. Then Raguel consented, and taking his daughter's right hand, placed it in that of Tobias, saying: "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you; may He join you together, and fulfill His blessing in you."

12. Then they sat down to eat. And Tobias and Sara spent three days in prayer, after which the devil had no power to harm them. Then, at the request of Tobias, the angel took the note of hand, went to the country of the Medes, collected the money from Gabelus, and returned with Gabelus to be present at the wedding.

13. Gabelus came with great joy, and when he saw the young husband he wept and embraced him, saying: "The God of Israel bless thee, because thou art the son of a very good and just man, and that feareth God, and doeth alms deeds. And may a blessing come upon thy wife."

#### QUESTIONS.

1, 2 and 3. What advice did the elder Tobias give to his son? 4. What did the son answer? What did Tobias send his son to Raguel to do? Whom did Tobias go out to seek? 5. Whom did he meet on going out? Who was this young man? Did Tobias know who he was? What did he say to the angel? What did the angel answer? What did the father ask the angel? 6. What did he reply? What did Tobias do when the young men were setting out? What did his mother say? What river did they reach the first evening of their journey? 7. What came out of the water when Tobias put in his feet to cool them? What did the angel tell him to do? What did he do with the fish, by the angel's direction? 8. When they came to a certain city, what did Tobias say to his guide? What did the angel tell him? What did Tobias answer? 9. What did Tobias say? What did the angel answer? 10. How was Tobias received by Raguel? What did Anna, the wife of Raguel, and Sara, his daughter, do? What did Tobias tell Raguel when he invited the two travelers to sit down to eat. 11. What did the angel tell Raguel when



he seemed to hesitate? What did Raguel say when he placed his daughter's hand in that of Tobias? 12. What did Tobias and Sara do? What followed? What did the angel do at the request of Tobias? 13. Whom did he invite to the wedding? What did Gabelus say when he saw the young husband?

## CHAPTER LXIX.

### *Tobias Returns Home.*

Praise the Lord, because He hath delivered the soul of the poor out of the hand of the wicked.—*Jer. 20, 13.*

**F**OURTEEN days had passed since the marriage of Tobias, and his parents at home began to be exceedingly sad, and they wept together because their son did not return. But his mother was quite disconsolate and she groaned and sighed: "Wo, wo is me, my son, why did we send thee to a strange country; the light of our eyes, the staff of our old age, the comfort of our life, the hope of our posterity!" Then Tobias said to her: "Hold thy peace, our son is safe." but she would not be comforted, but went out into all the ways that she might see him coming afar off.

2. Now Tobias the younger said to Raguel: "I know that my parents count the days, and their spirit is afflicted within them." However, Raguel pressed him to stay a little longer, but in vain. He then gave him Sara his wife, and the half of all he possessed, saying: "May the holy angel of the Lord be with you in your journey and bring you through safely, and that you may find all things well about your parents."

3. When the travelers had made half the journey homeward, the angel said to Tobias: "Let us go before and let the family softly follow after us." They did so and Raphael told Tobias to take with him the gall of the fish because it would be very useful.

4. Meanwhile Anna sat daily beside the way on the hill-top; and while she watched, she saw him coming far off.



When she was sure that it was her son coming, she ran to tell her husband. She had scarcely done so when the dog which had accompanied her son in his journey, running before, reached the house, wagging his tail and jumping for joy, as if he had brought the news. Thereupon, the elder Tobias, blind as he was, groped his way and went out to meet his son. And they all wept for joy.

5. Young Tobias then rubbed his father's eyes with the gall of the fish, and he saw, and the old man exclaimed: "I bless Thee, O Lord God of Israel, because Thou hast chastised me, and thou hast saved me, and behold I see Tobias my son!" Seven days after Sara and her retinue arrived and completed the joy of that favored and happy household. Then the son related to his parents all the benefits he had received from the young man, his guide. He said they could never repay him for all he had done for him, but asked his father's permission to give him one half of the money he had received from Gabelus.

6. The father willingly consented, and they pressed the young man to accept the money. But the heavenly messenger said to them: "Bless ye the God of heaven, and give glory to Him in the sight of all that live; because He hath shown His mercy to you. Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold. When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, I offered thy prayer to the Lord.

7. "And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee. The Lord hath sent me to heal thee, and to deliver Sara, thy son's wife, from the devil. For I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the throne of God." Hearing this, they were seized with fear, and all fell prostrate on the ground. Still the angel told them not to fear, but to bless and thank the Lord, who had sent him to do His holy will in their regard.

8. Having spoken this, he vanished from their sight,



leaving the little family lost in wonder and full of gratitude to God. The elder Tobias lived forty-two years after these events to share in the happiness of his family, and died at the age of one hundred and two years. Tobias, his son, lived to be very old; he saw the children of his children, who remained faithful, were beloved by God and man.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. Fourteen days having passed since his marriage, what did the parents of Tobias think and feel? What did his afflicted mother say? What did his father say? 2. What did Tobias say to Raguel? What did Raguel give him at his departure? 3. When the travelers had made half the journey homewards, what did Raphael propose to Tobias? What did the angel then tell Tobias to do when he got home? 4. What was Anna, his mother, meanwhile doing? To whom did she tell the news of his coming? What about the dog? What did the elder Tobias do? 5. What did young Tobias do to his father? What did the old man exclaim? Who arrived seven days after? What did the son relate to his parents? What did he ask his father's permission to do? 6 and 7. What did the heavenly messenger say to them when they pressed him to accept the money? What did the angel afterwards tell them? 8. How long did Tobias the elder live? What is said of Tobias the younger?

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## DECLINE OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDA.

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### CHAPTER LXX.

*The Prophets Joel and Micheas. (790 to 730 B. C.)*

The Lord hath sent to you the prophets, and you have not hearkened, nor inclined your ears to hear.—*Jer. 25, 4.*

**G**OD also sent to the inhabitants of the kingdom of Juda a great number of prophets whose powerful voice was heard throughout the land calling them to repentance. Many times did their words produce the desired effect and bring the people to repentance, and for awhile they served God with fidelity and sincerity.



2. Unhappily, these returns to virtue and religion were of short duration. Then it was that the prophets, with sorrowful hearts, began to announce to the rebellious people the downfall of their country, and the only consolation left to the prophets was the thought of the Messiah, whose coming they saw more clearly as time went on.

3. The prophet Joel spoke to the people in these terms: "Hear this, ye old men, and give ear all ye inhabitants of the land. Blow the trumpet in Sion, sound an alarm in My holy mountain; because the day of the Lord comes; because it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloom; a day of clouds and whirlwinds; a numerous people and a strong people, as the morning spread upon the mountains.

4. "Before the face thereof a devouring fire, and behind it a burning flame. Sacrifices and oblations have ceased to be offered in the house of the Lord. Rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God. Between the portico and the altar the priests, the Lord's ministers, shall weep, and shall say: 'Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people'."

5. The prophet Micheas is not less terrible in his warnings. "Hear, all ye peoples," he cries out, "and let the earth give ear. I will make Samaria as a heap of stones! I will bring down the stones thereof into the valley, and will lay her foundations bare. Hear this, ye princes of the house of Jacob; you that abhor judgment and pervert all that is right; you who built up Sion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity."

6. "Therefore, on account of you Sion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall be as a heap of stones, and the mountain of the temple as the high places of the forests. And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda; out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be the Ruler in Israel; and His going forth is from



the beginning, from the days of eternity." These prophecies have been literally<sup>1</sup> fulfilled. The prophecy about Bethlehem refers to the Savior, so that the Jews might know that the Redeemer promised to Adam, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to Juda, and to David would be born in Bethlehem.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Whom did God also send to the inhabitants of Juda? Did their words ever produce the desired effect? 2. Were these returns to virtue and religion of long duration? What did the prophets, with sorrowful hearts, then begin to announce? 3 and 4. In what terms did the prophet Joel speak to the people? 5. What did the prophet Micheas cry out? 6. What remarkable prophecy did he make about the little city of Bethlehem? Have these prophecies been fulfilled? To whom does the prophecy about Bethlehem refer?

### CHAPTER LXXI.

*King Ozias, wishing to Usurp the Priestly Functions, is Stricken with Leprosy. (803 B. C.)*

Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was.—*Heb. 5, 4.*

**O**ZIAS was one of the few faithful kings who ruled in Juda. He reigned fifty-two years, and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. And God directed him in all things. Unhappily, prosperity made him proud, and he carried his audacity so far as to usurp<sup>2</sup> the priestly office. One day, going into the temple, he went to burn incense upon the altar. Eighty priests, with Azarias the high-priest at their head, opposed the king, and prevented him from burning incense.

<sup>1</sup> LIT-E-RAL-LY, to the letter.

<sup>2</sup> USURP', to seize and hold in possession, by force or without right.



2. Ozias, being very angry, threatened to strike the priests with the censer which he held in his hand. No sooner had he raised his hand than he was stricken with leprosy, which appeared on his forehead before all the priests. And they, seized with horror at his sudden and awful punishment, took hold of the king and put him out of the temple.

3. He himself was terrified, feeling the leprosy all over his body, and he hastened away from the temple, to shut himself up in a palace apart from all others. He remained a leper till the day of his death. This was the fearful punishment which God sent to an otherwise faithful king, because of his sacrilegious<sup>1</sup> attempt to perform an office that belonged only to the priests.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. Who was Ozias? How long did he reign? How did he reign? What did prosperity make him? How far did he carry his audacity? What did he attempt to do one day when he went into the temple? Who opposed the king and prevented him from burning incense? 2. With what did Ozias threaten to strike the priests? With what was he stricken? What did the priests do? 3. What did he himself do, feeling the leprosy all over his body? How long did he remain a leper?

#### CHAPTER LXXII.

##### *The Prophecies of Isaias. (700 B. C.)*

I have declared Thy truth and Thy salvation.—Ps. 39, 11.

**D**URING the reign of the same Ozias, the people of Juda were guilty of many acts of idolatry. Wherefore, God sent them the great prophet Isaias. In sublime and terrific language he warned them of many fearful calamities that were to come upon their country.

2. The Lord also revealed to this prophet so many particu-

<sup>1</sup> SAC-RI-LE'-GIOUS, violating sacred things.



lars relating to the Savior of the world that, reading his prophecies, one would suppose Isaias had lived at the same time as our Divine Lord, instead of living seven hundred years before. A few of these prophecies will show how clearly this greatest of all the prophets foresaw the birth, passion and death of the Redeemer.

3. Speaking of the mother of the Messias, as well as of the Messias Himself, he said: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel, that is God-with-us. And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness. And He shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.

4. "A Child is born to us, a Son is given to us, and the government is upon His shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace. God himself will come and save you, then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." Concerning the passion of our Lord, he prophesied: "There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness. Despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows. He has borne our infirmities; He was wounded for our iniquities; He was bruised for our sins, and by His bruises we are healed. The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was offered because it was His own will and He opened not his mouth. He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer." Regarding His future glory, the prophet says: "The Gentiles shall beseech Him, and His sepulchre shall be glorious." Isaias prophesied about fifty years. It is said that he, while yet alive, was sawed in two by order of the impious king Manasses.



## QUESTIONS.

1. Of what were the people of Juda guilty during the reign of the same Ozias? Whom did God, therefore, send them? Of what did Isaias warn the people? 2. What did the Lord also reveal to this prophet? What would one suppose reading his prophecies? 3 and 4. What did Isaias foretell concerning the mother of the Savior? What did Isaias prophesy concerning the birth of the Redeemer? What, concerning His passion? What, regarding His future glory? How long did Isaias prophesy? What is said about the death of this great prophet?

## CHAPTER LXXIII.

*The Pious King Ezechias. (723-694 B. C.)*

He that is good, shall draw grace from the Lord.—*Prov. 12, 2.*

**D**URING the reign of Achaz the people of Juda were visited with a terrible calamity. That unhappy king had sacrificed his own children to the idol Moloch,<sup>1</sup> one of the chief gods of the Gentiles. He had broken the sacred vessels, and closed the gates of the temple. The Lord, therefore, delivered him into the hands of the king of Syria, who slew in one day a hundred and twenty thousand men of Juda, while two hundred thousand women and children were carried into captivity.

2. Achaz having died a short time after, his son Ezechias ascended the throne. This pious prince immediately cast down the altars which his unhappy father had everywhere raised to the pagan gods; he threw open again the gates of the temple, and exhorted the Levites to purify it from the profanations that had taken place there; saying that it was because of the sins of the people, and, above all, because of their idolatry, that so many misfortunes had come upon them.

3. And God blessed Ezechias, and was with him in all he

<sup>1</sup> MOLOCH (pr. Mo'-lok).